GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

Published Weekly by

THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

(The National Geographic Society is a scientific and educational Society, wholly altruistic, incorporated under the Federal law as a non-commercial institution for the increase of geographic knowledge and its popular diffusion.)

General Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

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BUTTON, BUTTON, WHO HAS THE—PANCAKE?

The annual scramble, known as "Pancake Greeze," at Westminster School, London. The boy who emerges with the largest portion is rewarded with a gold coin by the dean. In the background are Their Majesties, the King and Queen of England, the Prince of Wales, and the Duke of York (See Bulletin No. 5).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

The Geographic News Bulletins are published weekly throughout the school year (thirty issues) and will be mailed to teachers for one year upon receipt of 25 cents (in stamps or money order). Entered as second-class matter, January 27, 1922, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized February 9, 1922.

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Napier, the Atlantic City of New Zealand

THE worst disaster in the history of the Dominion of New Zealand struck with sudden fury Napier, the Atlantic City of Britain's farthest possession. Many other North Island towns in the vicinity suffered loss of life and property damage, but Napier, according to news reports, was practically leveled and the death toll reached the hundreds as a result of the earthquake of February 3.

Napier is known to New Zealanders as "Sunny Napier" because it has more days of sunshine each year than any other sizable town in the islands.

Popular Holiday Resort

Add to this the fact that the town has a fine, wide beach and is in a south latitude exactly corresponding to the north latitude of Atlantic City, New Jersey, and you get an inkling of one important aspect of Napier's life. It is one of the most popular holiday resorts of New Zealand.

Napier lies 200 miles northeast of Wellington, capital of New Zealand; and only a little farther southwest of Auckland, chief city. It is a town of close to 20,000 inhabitants and is the capital of the provincial district of Hawkes Bay.

There is no natural harbor, but a breakwater has been constructed of great blocks of concrete. A heavy swell almost constantly rolls in from the wide bay, throwing spray high into the air when its waves strike the mole. While this barrier affords protection to ships inside under ordinary conditions, it did not impede the waves that accompanied the earthquake. The business portion of the town is on a low plain only a few feet above sea level.

Along the wide beach extends for several miles a broad boulevard, the Parade, planted with Norfolk pines. It is said to be one of the finest esplanades in the southern hemisphere. At this time of the year—the southern summer—this esplanade and the beach are usually thronged with pleasure seekers.

Prosperous Sheep Country

Napier has grown rapidly with the development of Hawkes Bay Province. A relatively short time ago this country was a virgin forest. Now it is a region of alternating farms, dairy establishments and sheep-runs—probably the most prosperous sheep country in the Dominion. Many retired agriculturists have moved to Napier and built comfortable homes on Scinde Hill, the choice residence district that rises above the low business section.

Napier has not before suffered from an earthquake. While earth tremors have been frequent in the islands, as in many other parts of the world, most of them have been of such slight intensity as to require delicate instruments for their detection; or at most to stop clocks or put hanging pictures askew.

One serious earthquake occurred in 1848, however; and another in 1855 caused considerable damage to Wellington, then a struggling little town.

The most outstanding building in Napier is the Cathedral of St. John, built of brick, which ranks among the finest church structures in New Zealand.

Note: Students writing essays about New Zealand, its industries and its people, will find that this bulletin supplements Bulletin No. 27, Vol. IX, published January 26, 1931. For additional material about New Zealand see "Waimangu and the Hot-Spring Country of New Zealand," August, 1925; "Hurdle Racing in Canoes," May, 1920; and other articles in the *National Geographic Magazine*.

© Courtesy New Zealand Government

WAIMANGU, THE WORLD'S BIGGEST GEYSER

When this New Zealand giant was in its prime it hurled mud, stones and scalding water to a height of 1,500 feet—higher than the lofty Empire State Building in New York! After a long period of rumblings it has resumed activity. Waimangu is about 100 miles from Napier, scene of the recent disastrous earthquake (See Bulletin No. 1).

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The Dollar, a Spanish-Bohemian Immigrant

THE Provisional Government of Argentina is studying a project for a revision of the country's financial structure, including a central bank and a new currency system. The proposed central bank will be similar to our Federal Reserve Bank, and will operate to give a free flow of credit and reserves throughout the Republic.

Argentina's search for a stable monetary unit recalls the first appearance of the coinage of the United States 137 years ago.

Evolution of the Name

The name "dollar," applied to the American unit of money, came from the silver coin invented and minted by the Count of Schlick, at the tiny town of St. Joachimsthal, Bohemia (now Czecho-Slovakia), toward the end of the fifteenth century. Locally this new coin was first called "the Joachimsthaler." In Germany, the name was shortened to "thaler"; in Holland it became "daler"; and in England and the American Colonies, "dollar."

But although the name came in a round-about manner from a little town in Bohemia, the United States actually got its monetary unit from Spain. The dollar is really a "piece of eight"—the same glamorous piece of eight that played such an important rôle in pirate activities on the Spanish Main.

Alias for Pirate's "Piece of Eight"

In Spanish this signifies eight *reales*. In English it is spoken of as eight "bits." A bit is twelve and a half cents. In the south and west it is still customary to say "two bits" and "six bits." Thus does the division of the pieces of eight of piratic days on the Spanish Main still survive.

In 1794 the silver coins of the new nation began to appear—the half dime, half dollar, and dollar. In 1795 came the half eagle and eagle in gold. The silver dime and quarter dollar appeared in 1796, as did the quarter eagle. The double eagle, however, was not struck for circulation until 1850.

Of these the half dime has been displaced by the nickel five-cent piece. The present one-cent piece has been added and completes the metal currency now in use.

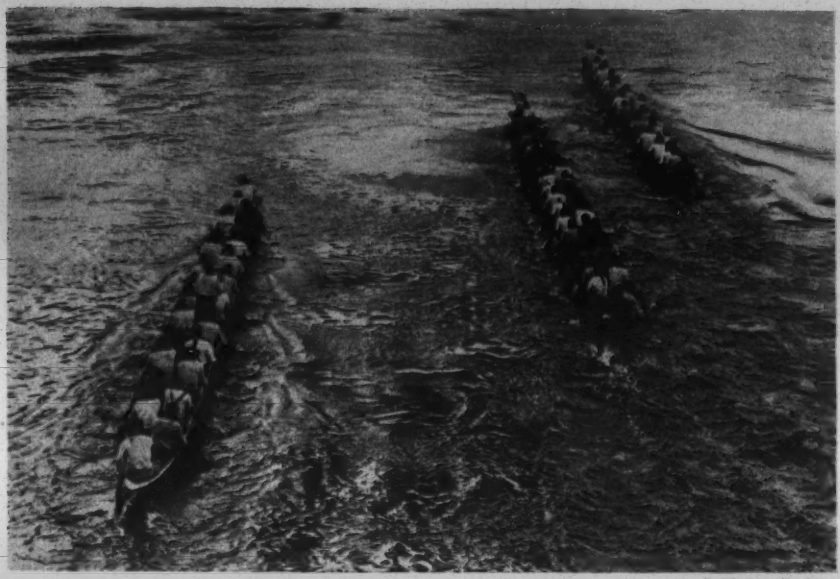
Coins That Blossomed and Faded

Other coins have been issued, maintained for a time, and discontinued. A three-dollar gold piece was minted from 1853 to 1890; a one-dollar gold piece from 1849 to 1890; a trade silver dollar for use in China, that was heavier than the standard coin, from 1873 to 1887; a three-cent silver piece from 1851 to 1873; a three-cent nickel piece from 1865 to 1890. A two-cent bronze piece, a big one-cent copper, a one-cent nickel piece, and a half-cent copper, have each been minted for a time and abandoned.

Mexico and most of the countries that were once a part of the Spanish Empire stamp their coins "peso," but they are commonly called "dollars." Canada, though a British Dominion, uses a dollar which, at par, is of equal value with ours. China stamps "dollar" on its coins, and Japan has its comparative coin called a "yen." The old Spanish pieces of eight, named "Spanish milled dollars" on the paper money of American Revolution days, have influenced the currency of a good part of the world, particularly of the regions that prefer silver.

Note: See also "The Geography of Money," December, 1927, *National Geographic Magazine*. In the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETIN for December 1, 1930, supplementary reading will be found in "Katanga: A Land of Calico Money."

Bulletin No. 2, February 23, 1931.



© *Walter Burke*

NINETY MAORI PADDLES CHURN THE WATER

Note the uniformity of stroke and the level keels. The use of a hollowed log as a canoe makes skill a necessity. The principal races among the Maoris of New Zealand take place on St. Patrick's Day, in the little North Island village of Ngaruawahia, a few miles north of Napier, recently devastated by earthquake.

Form for Renewal of Bulletin Requests

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National Geographic Society,
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Canary Islands Were Named for Dogs, Not Birds

WHEN the giant flying boat "DO-X" arrived in the Canary Islands early news reports told of flocks of "yellow canaries, for which the islands are named," greeting their bigger sister.

The Canary Islands, however, were named for dogs, not canaries. The Latin word for dog is "canis," and early explorers named the group "Canaria" because of "the multitude of dogs of great size there."

The "great dogs" are gone now, but there are canary birds—bright green in color! The more familiar yellow canary is raised in Germany.

Columbus Stopped There

The Canaries, poking their mountainous heads in grotesque shapes above the surface of the Atlantic, about 60 miles off the northwest shoulder of Africa, have long figured in transatlantic travel. Columbus stopped at Palma Island on his way to America.

The thirteen islands (seven large and six small ones) form a cup-shaped group, with Ferro standing aloof to the southwest. The Canaries are of volcanic origin. The height of their mountain peaks, thrust up from the bed of the Atlantic by violent eruptions, range from a few hundred to more than 12,000 feet.

"The Peak" of Teneriffe Island reaches 12,192 feet above sea level. Guanches, brown-skinned natives found on the islands by Columbus and other early visitors, whose ancestors frequently felt the wrath of The Peak, call it "Teide," meaning Hell.

Twice the Area of Rhode Island

Five of the Canaries, Teneriffe, Palma, Ferro, Gran Canaria, and Gomera, rise from the deep sea. Lanzarote, Fuerteventura and six small islets rise from an undersea plateau.

From shore to mountain top, travelers in the Canaries find climates ranging from that of Africa to that of northern Europe. The North African climate, where the warm sun promotes growth of banana and orange trees, sugar cane and cacti, is found up to 1,300 feet above sea level.

Slightly higher is the balmy climate of the French Riviera and central Italy. Farther up are vineyards, not unlike those of the Madeiras, to the north. Above 6,000 feet the cool atmosphere of northern Europe prevails, while among the high peaks snowshoes may be used nearly all the year.

If all the Canaries were drawn together, two Rhode Islands could be placed on top of the mass, side by side, and a portion of the Canaries would still be uncovered. But "Canarian" population numbers only about two-thirds of the population of Rhode Island.

White Houses; Red Roofs

Splendid harbors are found along the Canary shores. The ports of Santa Cruz (Teneriffe), and Las Palmas (Palma), handle the bulk of the islands' trade. Santa Cruz, a mass of yellow and white houses gleaming under flat, red roofs, is the capital of the archipelago. Dust from the surrounding hills is a menace to travelers in the city, but a panorama of the Santa Cruz waterfront indicates that

© Photograph by C. E. Finnell

HERE IS WHAT A MILLION DOLLARS LOOKS LIKE!

In this pile are 50,000 twenty-dollar gold pieces, weighing almost two tons. Each of the 10 trays holds $100,000. This "path of gold" was exhibited in the office of the city treasurer of San Francisco, California.

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"Home Work" Easy for Students Writing about Byrd

SCHOOL students do not mind "home work" when they can be enthusiastic about the subject.

Evidence of this can be seen in the overwhelming response to the suggestion that school children voluntarily write letters to Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd, aerial conqueror of the North and South Poles. Thousands of these letters collected by the National Education Association, have been bound and will be presented to Admiral Byrd as a tribute when he appears before the Department of Superintendence Convention, at Detroit, February 23.

Every State in the Union is represented in the gift volume. Some of the letters are essays on the value of exploration, revealing close study of Admiral Byrd's books and his four articles in the *National Geographic Magazine*.*

Several Written by Blind Students

Among the most unusual of the letters received in Washington are several written by blind children of Cleveland, Ohio, in raised Braille characters. One of these students hopes that Admiral Byrd's books will some day be printed in Braille. A transcription of the letter is written between the Braille characters by the teacher.

New Orleans children sent a handsome box of letters. The box was designed and made by manual training students from Louisiana tidewater cyprus wood, and the cover is suitably inscribed.

An Illuminated Manuscript

A group of students from Vineland, New Jersey, presented an illuminated manuscript, depicting in color Byrd's plane as the children saw it when he flew over New Jersey's "Egg Basket."

Some of the letters are informal and chatty, and bring in personal associations in a neighborly way, such as this one from a Plandome, New York, boy in the sixth grade:

"I am happy to have the opportunity to write to the man who explored the South Pole. I have seen the pictures of your adventures in the cold blizzards.

"One of the men who went with you came to our house to stay overnight. He took care of all the dog sleds. His name is Norman Vaughn. I took a guess at how to spell it and I hope it is right.

"In those pictures of your expedition, I liked best where you dressed Igloo, your dog, in that sweater and shoes. Next I liked where you dropped the flag at the South Pole. I really think it all was wonderful."

Model of Byrd's Ship

An enthusiastic River Falls, Wisconsin, youth carved a model of Admiral Byrd's ship, "The City of New York," from a cake of laundry soap, and sent it with his letter of tribute. It is complete with sails and rigging.

One New York City schoolboy illustrated his letter with pen sketches of the

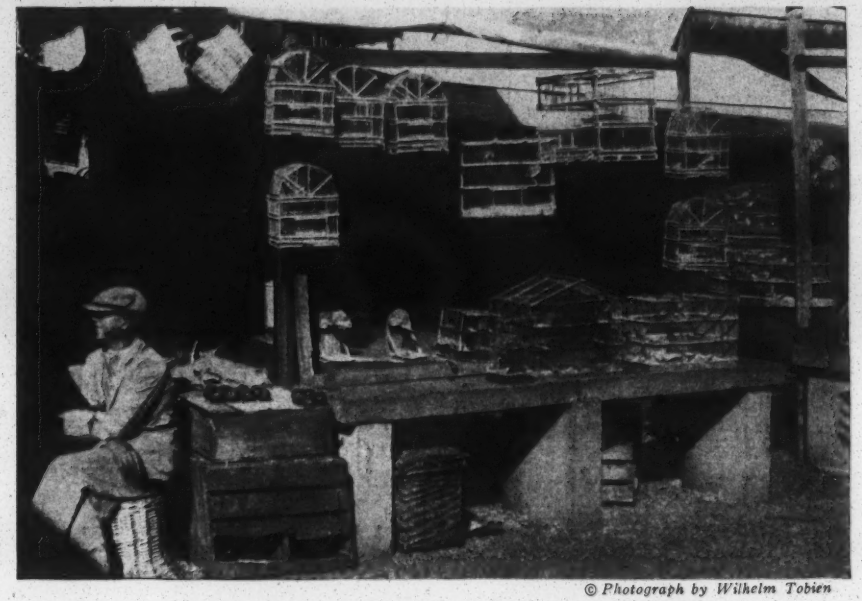
* "Conquest of Antarctica by Air," August, 1930; "The First Flight to the North Pole," September, 1926; "Our Transatlantic Flight," September, 1927; "Flying Over the Arctic," November, 1925.

the natives are unmindful of the nuisance. The Spanish governor of the Canaries resides in Santa Cruz. The islands are not a colony, but a part of Spain.

Bananas have become the chief commodity of the Canaries in recent years. Until 1853 the Canary vineyards made the archipelago famous in Europe. A plant disease destroyed the vineyards, and cochineal, dried bodies of insects that cling to leaves of cactus plants, poured money into the pockets of the agricultural population. Sugar cane, potatoes, tomatoes and onions, along with bananas, now make up the larger part of the islands' exports.

Note: The Canary Islands, where streets are carpeted with flowers, are described and illustrated with natural color photographs in the following: "In the Canary Islands," and "Hunting for Plants in the Canary Islands," May, 1930, *National Geographic Magazine*. See also "The Pathfinder of the East," November, 1927; and "The Dream Ship," January, 1921.

Bulletin No. 3, February 23, 1931.



© *Photograph by Wilhelm Tobien*

AN APPROPRIATE SOUVENIR OF THE CANARY ISLANDS

These canary birds, for sale in the Las Palmas market, have green plumage. The more familiar variety, raised in Germany, are yellow. And, believe it or not, the Canary Islands received their name from the Latin word, canis, or dog, and not from the bird which has carried their name around the world.

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The Tiny "City" of London, England

THE whole of the City of London, and a large area to the west and south of it, are to be forbidden ground for long-distance motor coaches on week days, according to an announcement made in the English metropolis.

To the outsider the ruling appears to be rather drastic, unfortunate for the coach companies and for those who use them.

But the "City" of London is really only a tiny spot, a square mile in area. The London of common knowledge, the London of some seven-and-a-half million inhabitants, is the County of London. It includes the City of Westminster, with its Parliament buildings, and it also includes the original City of London, just a patch in the center of the great Metropolitan district.

A City within a City

The City is by far the oldest and the most interesting part of London. While it does not contain the Parliament buildings, nor Westminster Abbey, nor any of the royal palaces, it is the commercial and banking center, the newspaper center, and in St. Paul's Cathedral and the Tower of London it has two of England's most famous institutions.

It is still essentially the district in which the Romans founded *Londinium*. Walls, most of which have been long since torn down, define many of its streets, and gates, such as Aldgate, Bishopgate, Moorgate and Temple Bar, are preserved in street and place names. (See illustration, next page.)

"The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street"

Visitors to London are aware of a difference when their wanderings lead them from one of the other boroughs or cities of London into The City. The streets are narrower and more winding, and the atmosphere is surcharged with activity and bustle.

In the very midst of The City broods that portentous dowager "The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street," more formally The Bank of England.

One may feel the pulse beats of the world in Fleet Street, London's concentrated newspaper and press association center. Here the printing presses never stop, early morning editions of evening papers following hard on the headlines of midnight editions of morning journals. Londoners read many newspapers.

London Bridge Can't Fall Down

The London Bridge of incipient, nursery-rhyme collapse is not the present stately, arched structure. Nothing short of an earthquake could fell its sturdy granite spans. London Bridge connects The City with the borough of Southwark, and marks the farthest point that ocean vessels may ascend the Thames.

The Guildhall, or Hall of the Corporation of the City of London, would be known as the City Hall elsewhere. Here the chief business of The City is carried on. It should be pointed out, however, that this is not the administrative center for Metropolitan London. The Lord Mayor of The City of London each year receives the Crown's approval and the crowd's huzzas, but a quiet man, almost unknown to Londoners themselves, sits in the County Hall in Lambeth borough,

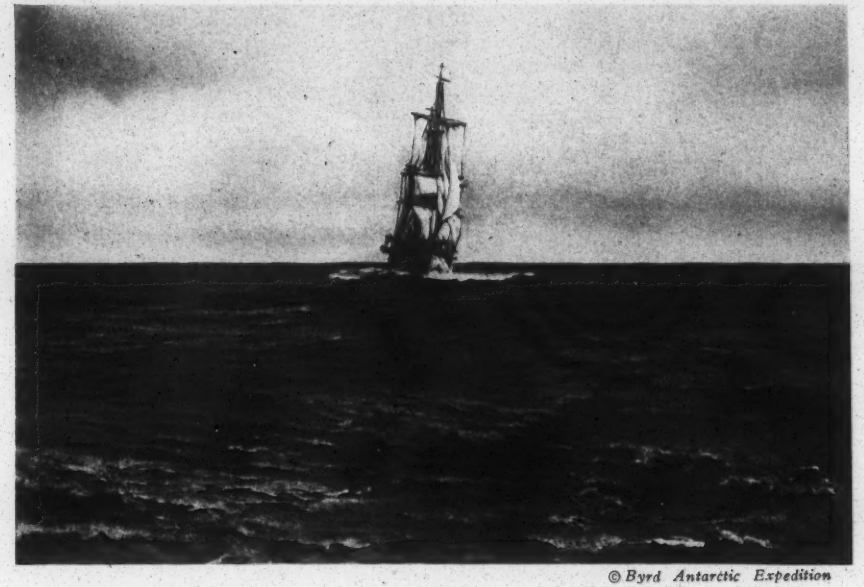
Antarctic. Accurately portrayed are scenes of "Little America," the dog sledges, penguins, and the Polar plane. A lad, whose name indicates Spanish parentage, sent from El Paso, Texas, a full-length drawing of Admiral Byrd, in his naval uniform. Two other large pictures of the explorer were sent from Concord, New Hampshire, and Lakewood, Ohio.

Many of the packets of student letters contain accompanying notes from teachers, endorsing the idea. One Maine teacher says, "the letter-writing idea has been a greater incentive to spontaneous study in geography, history and English than anything we have had this year."

More than 3,000 letters have been received, and these represent the best of some 40,000 already submitted to teachers for a preliminary elimination. The presentation exercises will be broadcast over the Columbia network from Detroit, Monday, February 23, 8:30 to 9 p.m.

Admiral Byrd will be introduced by Dr. Gilbert Grosvener, president of the National Geographic Society, which helped support the Antarctic Expedition, and under the auspices of which Admiral Byrd gained his first far northern flying experience on an expedition to Greenland in 1925. The presentation of the letters will be made by Dr. Norman R. Crozier, of Dallas, Texas, president of the Department of Superintendence, National Education Association.

Bulletin No. 4, February 23, 1931.



© *Byrd Antarctic Expedition*

THE "CITY OF NEW YORK," STURDY CARRIER OF 20TH-CENTURY ARGONAUTS

This staunch little vessel is no speed marvel, but she withstood the battering punishment of the Antarctic ice pack and brought Admiral Byrd and his fellow explorers safely home from their great adventure.

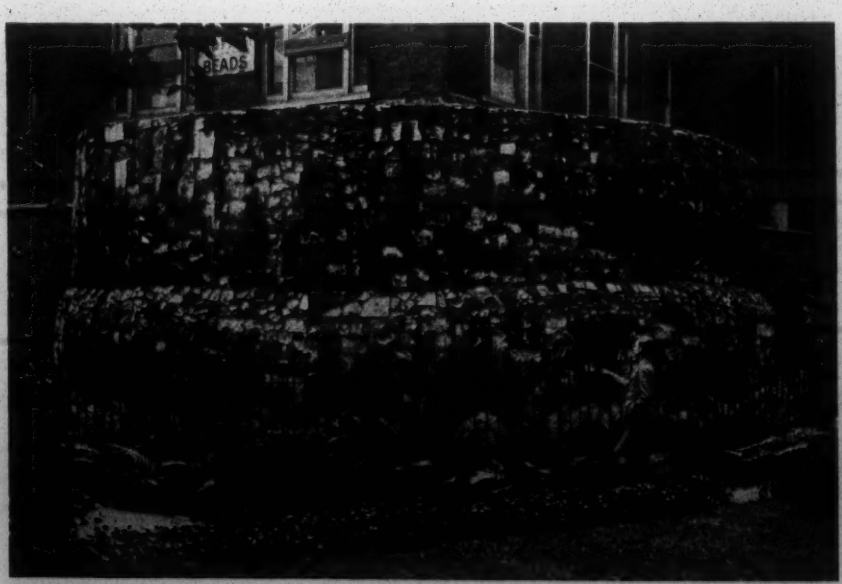
passing on the major affairs of London without thought or permission of the Lord Mayor.

This virtual unknown is the Chairman of the London County Council, the real ruling body for Greater London. The Lord Mayor's power extends only over the square mile of the City of London. The Chairman of the London County Council, who is chosen from the 124 councilors elected by the taxpayers of all London, has control of housing, education, public health, streets, water supply, and numerous other vital matters throughout the entire Metropolitan district.

The Corporation of the City of London, however, is of greater antiquity than the English Parliament. Custom demands that English sovereigns who wish to visit The City must present themselves at Temple Bar, and request permission to do so. The Lord Mayor then offers the sword of The City to the King, who graciously returns it to the Mayor. The City itself has never been the capital of England, but, by espousing the popular cause, has managed to secure many privileges for itself.

Note: London, one of the greatest cities in the world and the capital of a world-wide empire, is described and illustrated in "Highlights of London Town," May, 1929, *National Geographic Magazine*, and "London from a Bus Top," May, 1926. See also: "Black Headed Gulls in London," June, 1925; "Through the Heart of England in a Canadian Canoe," and "The World Viewed from the Air," May, 1922, and other articles in the *National Geographic Magazine* which may be found by consulting the Cumulative Index of The Magazine in your school or public library.

Bulletin No. 5, February 23, 1931.



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A LITTLE BIT OF LONDON'S ROMAN WALL

Here, in the churchyard of St. Giles Cripplegate, is a relic of the days of the Caesars, when Britain was one of Rome's far-flung colonies. This ancient stonework, in the heart of busy London, is 12 feet thick and 20 feet high. The church is noted as the burial place of John Milton, author of "Paradise Lost." Cripplegate, which in Anglo-Saxon means "covered way," was a gate in the Roman wall at this point.